

From: EDC Minister <Education.Minister@gov.ab.ca>
To: "contact@parentalconsentalberta.ca" <contact@parentalconsentalberta.ca>
Date: 05/01/2025 10:11 AM EDT
Subject: Reply: The Minimum Remedy Needed to Bring Safe and Rational Balance to Parent-Child-State Rights

Hi Carman:

The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, forwarded your email in which you share your thoughts about the *Education Amendment Act, 2024*. As Minister of Education, I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

We believe that one of the greatest responsibilities we have as parents, teachers, and community leaders is to preserve our children's choices as they grow and develop. This is key to ensuring they are prepared to make the most impactful decisions affecting their lives.

We have heard from parents across the province that they want to be more involved in their children's education, and we are happy to strengthen their involvement through the [Education Amendment Act, 2024](#). Our amendments are focused on promoting student success and well-being, and on helping parents and educators navigate complex conversations around human sexuality, gender identity, and sexual orientation. These legislative amendments are anticipated to come into effect on September 1, 2025.

As part of the amendments, parents must be notified of a student's request to have a new gender-identity-related preferred name or pronouns used by teachers, teacher leaders, and other school staff. For students under 16 years old, the new preferred name or pronouns can only be used by teachers and other school staff following parental consent.

For classroom subject matter dealing primarily or explicitly with human sexuality, gender identity, or sexual orientation, schools must provide parents with notice at least 30 days in advance, and parents will have the option to opt their child in to (rather than opt out of) all or part of the instruction. Indirect or incidental references to these topics would not require notification or opt-in consent.

To clarify, the parental notification and opt-in requirements would apply when direct references to these themes are included as part of learning outcomes identified by Alberta Education (for example, in Health and Life Skills). Indirect or incidental references would include situations such as a single reference in a book being discussed in English Language Arts, and would not require parental notification or opt in.

Additionally, learning and teaching resources dealing primarily and explicitly with human sexuality, gender identity, or sexual orientation must be approved by the Minister of Education, unless they are used for religious instruction. All external presenters on these topics, whether in the context of religious instruction or otherwise, must be approved by the Minister of Education. The exemption for resources used for religious instruction was

made based on stakeholder feedback about the interconnection of sexual education and religious instruction. The legislation balances the need for transparency with flexibility for religious instruction programs to select resources that align with their faith.

In regard to your comments about gay-straight alliances, the [Education Act](#) provides students with the ability to establish certain voluntary, student-led organizations intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. These include gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs, and anti-bullying clubs.

The amendments in the *Education Amendment Act, 2024* do not affect the ability for students to establish these student-led organizations. However, one of the amendments will require that before an external organization can present learning and teaching resources that deal primarily and explicitly with gender identity, sexual orientation, or human sexuality to a student-led-organization, both the resources and the external party itself will require approval by the Minister of Education.

We will continue to work with education partners throughout the implementation of these policies.

I hope this information is helpful, and I appreciate you taking the time to write.

Best,

Demetrios Nicolaidis ECA PhD

Minister of Education